

**MINUTES OF THE GREENSBORO HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER  
MELVIN MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING  
MARCH 29, 2006**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** CHAIR BOWERS, AYSCUE, FREYALDENHOVEN,  
HATFIELD, KELLY, STOUT, WHARTON.

**STAFF PRESENT:** STEFAN-LEIH GEARY and Russ Clegg, Housing and Community  
Development (HCD); MIKE WILLIAMS, City Attorney's Office.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bowers called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. She welcomed all of them.

**INTRODUCTIONS AND PROCEDURES**

Chair Bowers introduced the Commissioners and staff and gave a brief overview of the procedures that the meeting would follow.

**STAFF AND SPEAKERS SWORN OR AFFIRMED**

All persons who intended to speak at the meeting, as well as staff, were sworn or affirmed. Chair Bowers said if anyone else decided to speak later, they would be sworn in at that time.

Commissioners confirmed that they had received their packets in a timely manner; no Commissioner had a conflict of interest with regard to any item on the agenda; no Commissioner had discussed any application prior to the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF ABSENCES:**

Ms. Geary said the absence of Commissioner Coleman was approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 22, 2006 MEETING:**

Ms. Hatfield moved approval of the February 22, 2005 meeting as written, seconded by Mr. Wharton. The Commission voted unanimously 8-0 in favor of the motion.

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (PUBLIC HEARING):**

**a) Application No.749**

**Location: 833 North Elm Street**

**Applicant: Junior League of Greensboro, NC, Inc. President Tiffany Franks**

**Property Owner: Mary Fabrikant (APPROVED WITH CONDITION)**

**Description of Work:**

Construction of a handicap accessibility ramp, steps and entrance; landscaping.

**Staff comment and recommendation:**

Based on information contained in the application, the staff recommends in favor of granting this Certificate of Appropriateness. In the staff's opinion the proposed work will not be incongruous with the *Historic District Design Guidelines- Safety and Code Requirements* (page 69-70) and *Windows and*

Doors (pages 55-61), for the following reasons:

*As part of the approval of Application No. 741 for the construction of a parking area and removal of trees, the applicant was required to bring the above items back to the Commission for approval.*

**Fact**

The proposed accessibility ramp will be constructed at the side and rear elevation of the house and while visible from East Hendrix Street, it will not be easily visible from the front elevation of the house along N. Elm Street.

**Fact**

The ramp will be constructed of wood and painted to match the house. It will not be permanently attached to the historic structure. The ramp design and dimensions are in keeping with ADA regulations.

**Guidelines under Safety and Code Requirements Page 70:**

- 1) Introduce fire exits, stairs, landings, and ramps on rear or inconspicuous side locations.
- 2) Construct fire exits, stairs, landings and ramps in such a manner that they do not damage historic materials and features. Construct them so that they can be removed in the future with minimal damage to the historic structure.
- 3) Design and construct new fire exits, stairs, and landing to be compatible with the scale, materials, details, and finish of the historic structure.
- 4) Introduce reversible features to assist persons with disabilities so that the original design of the entrance or porch is not diminished and historic materials or features are not damaged.

**Fact**

The ramp will provide entrance to the building at an existing side elevation porch. Originally, the porch had an exterior set of French Doors that was closed in by a previous owner. This application proposes to reinstall a door in the same location as the original. The new door will be a single French door 34" in width to meet ADA guidelines. The new door will match the transom and door on the front elevation in design and material.

**Fact**

The existing steps and landing on the rear elevation will be removed and replaced with new concrete steps and landing. This will not be visible from the street.

**Guidelines under Windows and Doors Page 57:**

- 1) Retain and preserve the pattern, arrangement, and dimensions of window and door openings on principal elevations. Often the placement of windows is an indicator of a particular architectural style, and therefore contributes to the building's significance. If necessary for technical reasons, locate new window or door openings on secondary elevations, and introduce units that are compatible in proportion, location, shape, pattern, size, materials, and details to existing units. For commercial and/or institutional buildings in need of a utility entrance on secondary elevations, select a location that meets the functions of the building, but is least visible from the street and causes the least amount of alteration to the building. It is not appropriate to introduce new window and/or door openings into the principal elevations of a contributing historic structure.

**Fact**

The submitted landscaping plan meets the requirements specified in the conditions for approval of Application No. 741 showing existing trees, new trees and other landscaping.

**In Support:**

Tiffany Franks, 809 Fairmont Street, previously sworn or affirmed.  
 Daniela Helms, 306 West Cornwallis Drive, previously sworn or affirmed.  
 Alexa Aycock, 2812 South Regis Road, sworn or affirmed.

**In Opposition:**

David Shubb, 211 West Bessemer Avenue, previously sworn or affirmed; president Fisher Park Neighborhood Association.

**IN REBUTTAL - SUPPORT:**

Tiffany Franks, 809 Fairmont Street.  
 Alexa Aycock, 2812 South Regis Road.

**Summary:**

Chair Bowers said this is Application No. 749 for work at 833 North Elm Street. The applicant is the Junior League, Tiffany Franks, president. The description of the work is constructing a handicap ramp, new entrance and landscaping. Staff recommends approval, citing Guidelines on page 55-61 and also Guidelines 1,2,3 and 4, page 70 and Guideline 1 on page 57. This application is addressing conditions from our last meeting. Ms. Geary cited that the ramp will be the side and the back, it will be out of wood, it is not permanent and the Zoning Commission has approved it. There will be a new door opened up in the site of a previous door. It will be 34 inches wide and will open outside. It will match the front door, being a French door with a transom. There will also be new concrete steps. A new landscaping plan has been submitted.

Speaking in support of the application is Tiffany Franks, 809 Fairmont Street, and Daniela Helms, 306 West Cornwallis, the president-elect of the Junior League. They said they wanted to make sure that they had done things properly and the question was made, if they removed a tree, would they replace it with a new one. Alexa Aycock, 2812 St. Regis Road, who is the landscape architect, addressed this issue and said that the front yard was not large. There are two large magnolias and felt more sunshine would help the front of the house and shrubbery and the visibility. She said the Maple was diseased. Ms. Geary noted that a dying tree could be approved at staff level and also that this project had trees beyond requirement.

Speaking in opposition to the application is David Shubb, 211 West Bessemer Avenue, president of the Fisher Park Association. The Association did not have a quorum so there was no Board position. He said they were in favor of the Junior League having the house and mentioned several concerns about the landscaping plan and how the parking lot would affect a neighbor. He also said one person had a question about the handicap rails, why they were not natural wood versus painted, and one neighbor did not get a notification of the COA.

Speaking in rebuttal were Tiffany Franks and Alexa Aycock. They said they would be glad to explore the handrails, but white matched the house. For the buffer, they said the Technical Review Committee had approved the plantings and that some of the plants went from six to three or four feet high eventually. The neighbor had a buffer and she felt that would blend things in. There was a discussion about how far the Commission could go in requiring plant heights, but the owner said they were in agreement that the two and a half feet height for a new plant was good and really wanted the homes to have a residential feel and commented that the League had supported Preservation for many years.

**Discussion:**

There was a general discussion among the Commissioners. Some expressed concern regarding the landscaping. Ms. Hatfield felt that the shrubbery used as screening in the back should be at least two and a half feet when it is planted. Ms. Kelly said she agreed with Mr. Wharton and felt good about the plan.

**Finding of Fact:**

Ms. Hatfield moved that based on the findings of fact presented in Application No. 749 and the public hearing, the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission finds that the proposed project is congruous with the *Historic District Program Manual and Design Guidelines* and that staff comments relating to Windows and Doors, pages 55-61 and addressing parking areas on page 30 of the Guidelines are acceptable as findings of fact. Ms. Stout seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously 8-0 in favor of the motion.

**Motion:**

Therefore, Ms. Hatfield moved that the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission approve Application No. 749 and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Junior League of Greensboro, North Carolina, for work at 833 North Elm Street as put forth in their application and landscape plan, with the additional condition that the shrubbery plantings to be done in the back to screen the paved parking area shall be at least two and a half feet in height when they are planted. Mr. Stout seconded the motion. The Commission voted 7-1 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Bowers, Ayscue, Freyaldenhoven, Hatfield, Hensley, Kelly, Stout. Nays: Wharton.)

**b) Application No.748****Location: 902 Carolina Street****Applicant: Joe Thompson****Property Owner: Burt and Debbie Fields****Date Application Received: 3/13/06****(CONTINUED)****Description of Work:**

Replacement of window sash with matching wood insulated glass window sash.

**Staff comment and recommendation:**

Based on information contained in the application, the staff recommends in favor of granting this Certificate of Appropriateness with conditions. In the staff's opinion the proposed work will not be incongruous with the *Historic District Design Guidelines- Windows and Doors* (pages 55-61), for the following reasons:

**Fact**

The application proposes to replace the window sash in the existing 6 over 1 double hung wood windows with new wood insulated glass sashes to match the existing in material and appearance.

**Fact**

The original wood sashes with storm windows do not provide the energy efficiency desired by the property owner and are in a deteriorated state. To avoid removing the original window casing and other features associated with the original window profile, the property owner proposes to remove only that portion that is most deteriorated and will increase energy efficiency.

**Fact**

The proposed Marvin Wood Ultimate Insert Double Hung sash product is designed specifically to meet the needs of energy efficiency, avoid wholesale window replacement and be sensitive to the issues surrounding aging and ineffective windows in historic structures. In staff's opinion, the product has a favorable outcome when compared with each of the criteria as listed under guideline 3(b).

**Guidelines under Windows and Doors Page 57:**

- 1) Retain and preserve the pattern, arrangement, and dimensions of window and door openings on principal elevations. Often the placement of windows is an indicator of a particular architectural style, and therefore contributes to the building's significance. If necessary for technical reasons, locate new window or door openings on secondary elevations, and introduce units that are compatible in proportion, location, shape, pattern, size, materials, and details to existing units. For commercial and/or institutional buildings in need of a utility entrance on secondary elevations, select a location that meets the functions of the building, but is least visible from the street and causes the least amount of alteration to the building. It is not appropriate to introduce new window and/or door openings into the principal elevations of a contributing historic structure.
- 2) Retain and preserve original windows and doors, including such elements as sash, glass, sills, lintels, casings, muntins, trim, frames, thresholds, hardware and shutters. If repair of an original window or door element is necessary, repair only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, composition, material, dimension, and detail by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorated section. The removal of historic materials shall be avoided.
- 3) When repair is not feasible, as determined by City staff, true divided light wood windows are an appropriate replacement product for original wood windows, when designed to match the original in appearance, detail, material, profile, and overall size as closely as possible. Double-pane glass may be considered when they are true divided and can accurately resemble the original window design.
  - a. It is not appropriate to replace true divided light windows with vinyl windows or windows with snap-in muntins.
  - b. Window products will be reviewed on an individual basis using the following criteria:
    - i. Kind and texture of materials.
    - ii. Architectural and historical compatibility.
    - iii. Comparison to original window profile.
    - iv. Level of significance of original windows to the architectural style of the building.
    - v. Existence of lead paint or other safety hazards.
    - vi. Material performance and durability.

**Condition:** That the approved material be the Wood Ultimate Insert Double Hung Sash and NOT the Clad Ultimate Insert Double hung Sash.

**In Support:**

None.

**In Opposition:**

None

**Discussion:**

There was a discussion among the Commissioners, which resulted in several questions. Counsel Williams advised that if the Commissioners had basic questions they wanted answers to, they might wish to continue this item. Ms. Hatfield said she had not wanted the Guideline that requirement for window repair to be stated as it was, but they are the way they are. She felt that before the Commission made a determination, the Commissioners should know the condition of the windows being replaced. Mr. Wharton said perhaps the Commission would want to see the windows and definitely would want a sample of the replacement.

Ms. Geary said the Commission wanted to see a window sample, find out how it is installed, the condition of the present windows, was this product available when the Guidelines were revised and is a blower test available for this house.

There was a discussion about the Guidelines as to windows. The suggestion was made that perhaps these needed to be revisited.

**MOTION:**

Ms. Hatfield moved that Application No. 748 be continued to the Commission's next meeting, seconded by Mr. Stout. The Commission voted unanimously 8-0 in favor of the motion.

**ITEMS FROM COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON OR COMMISSIONERS:**

Mr. Wharton said they had spoken earlier about developing an educational video for the *Historic District Program* and he was curious as to what is happening with that.

Ms. Geary said she would encourage the Commission to ask Mr. Cowhig at the next meeting.

Mr. Stout said Preservation North Carolina is talking about trying to establish something in looking at new materials. There is a Website out there called, "New Home Building or Buying 101," and it talks about the new windows, etc. So they were thinking about something along the lines of, "Old House Buying 101," and something that talks about the energy efficiency issues and how you accommodate those things and looking at how to insulate, etc. He would like to hear comments on that if the Commissioners think that is a worthy thing.

Ms. Hatfield said she felt that some sort of event where you take a well-known property in the neighborhood and try to let everybody know what the tests are and something that might really spark some interest, especially since everybody is concerned about heating bills.

Mr. Stout said the Secretary of the Interior Standards do not allow blown insulation either and there has got to be some kind of compromise there. He gets that question all the time and, "What am I supposed to do?" There have to be some products out there that have been approved. That is the kind of thing he would like to see the Commissioners look at are new products and how to accommodate maintaining the historic character, but make it more energy efficient or whatever the other issues are.

Ms. Geary said she thought there was a preservation brief on emergency efficiency in historic structures. As we were saying earlier, new products and new techniques are constantly coming out and if we are going to stay ahead of the replaced windows mentality, we have got to keep up with the new products and techniques that are available.

**ITEMS FROM DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

Ms. Kuns wanted she wanted to talk with the Commission about was "The Land for Tomorrow Tours," which was in each packet and is the last page. There is a letter from former Mayor Caroline Allen. She was planning to attend one of those even though the RSVP date was actually before you received your packets. She contacted them today and they said they would be more than happy for her to call them in the morning and let them know if we have anyone attending. It is the same tour both days, but if any Commissioner is interested in going, they could on the same day.

Mr. Stout said the Commission had signed on for this and the Commission had agreed to be one of the partners. He had gone to the one in Salisbury.

Mr. Wharton said there had been a task force of citizens and staff working on some proposals for the renovation of War Memorial Stadium for the past eight months or so. He had been on it, as has Benjamin Briggs from Preservation Greensboro, neighborhood representatives, representatives from Greensboro College and North Carolina A&T, which used the stadium. They have been trying to come up with a renovation proposal. They finished their work and brought their recommendations to City Council on Tuesday at the last Council briefing. It is an ambitious proposal basically to retain importance to our features at the stadium, at the same time placing it in a park setting, making the area around it a City park and integrating it as well, as much as possible, with the Greensboro Farmers' Curb Market, which also is an historic structure even though it is not in an historic district, but it is something he thought the Commission should be concerned about as well. It is an expensive proposal. The recommendation that the task force gave to the Council was for \$5.5 million, plus a couple of million for site development. It is expensive, but it is a great proposal. He had a single copy of the consultant's report, if any Commissioner would like to see it.

Ms. Geary said an electronic copy had been requested from the consulting firm so that they could distribute it a little more broadly and hopefully drum up some support for it.

City Council is still considering this proposal in the form of a bond. Mr. Wharton said he would like to solicit the Commissioners' support in contacting members of City Council to ask them to put it on the next bond referendum, if you think it is appropriate. If it gets there, then to support it and try to get voter support for it as well. The consultant said we were trying to ensure that we retain the stadium's National Register standing. They are asking for help from the State Preservation Office and from the National Park Service and they said, "We cannot give you a lot of guidance because you are really the first people to try to rehab a stadium." So it is really a groundbreaking thing. In terms of preservation in Greensboro, he thought it was a really important project.

Counsel Williams asked if there were any grants for it anywhere since it is such a unique situation?

Ms. Geary said she was going to move forward with trying to look into some additional funding sources. We are just kind of in this situation with the bond and if we want to jump on this, we have got to more. One thing to note, the three proposals, because of the condition of the stadium and it was in such a deteriorating state, the \$5.5 million for scheme 3, which is most elaborate of the three proposals, actually \$4 million of that is consistent through all three schemes because that is just pure concrete reinforcement, new reinforced concrete being poured, so really you have \$1.5 million in wiggle room between the three schemes that go from like moth balling a certain portion of it to turning it into a green plaza to turning it into a paved plaza to adding a warming kitchen, a museum type gallery facility and some other features. Despite what newspapers want to say, they all have a lot of respect for each other and felt like they had a really good group working together.

#### **SPEAKERS FROM THE AUDIENCE:**

David Shubb spoke to several concerns. He said the Guidelines say that if a significant tree is diseased or damaged, that it has to be replaced. It is not a penalty on the homeowner. It specifically says the damaged or diseased tree needs to be replaced. He cited Guideline 5.

Ms. Kuns suggested that Mr. Shubb put this concern in an e-mail to Mike Cowhig along with other concerns he may have.

Mr. Shubb said he wanted to talk about parking lots. There was a big one going on Elm Street with the new structure that was put in there across from the Presbyterian Church that we fought for awhile. There is the parking lot going in with the ??? house and if any of you feel it is not appropriate to

enclose particular screening or landscaping requirements on parking lots, please do not allow the parking lots to go in because they really are a major impact on the neighborhood. If they cannot be sufficiently screened from the moment they go in, it really hurts us residents.

Mr. Wharton said the Guidelines do allow us to require screening and he thought that the zoning provisions also require it as well. But what he would like to see the Commission stay away from is micro managing that process. It is not because he was anti-preservation; it is because he thought that it hurts ordinary citizens' perceptions of this body when they see us getting involved in the very small details of projects. He thought it gave the Commission a bad reputation and it turns people away from preservation, so that was his concern. He thought it was very important for the Commission to stay within the boundaries that are set by the City Statutes.

Counsel Williams said if he might interject since he also brought this up, he truly believe if the Commission oversteps its bounds or if somebody perceives that the Commission is overstepping its bounds and the Commission is challenged that the Commission most likely would be overruled.

Ms. Geary said the Commission was dealing with some P.R. issues, not so many P.R. issues as some folks who are advocating against the Historic Preservation Commission. That does not mean that we become lax in our preservation standards, but just means that we tread carefully and really think hard about if you really want to say that another City tree standard is not adequate. She felt that rather than us be the ones to say, "You've got to make it to require more," let it fall on the tree standards and the Technical Review Committee to set those standards.

Counsel Williams said that plan had been reviewed from the zoning ordinance's side and they basically decided that there was adequate screening.

Mr. Stout said the Commission said it would not re-approve that parking based on seeing a landscape plan. We may not have approved that parking if we had known that then.

Ms. Geary said the commission had actually been given a very informal landscaping plan that showed where new trees were being planted because they had to provide something like that to meet that one tree for every 15 foot fact that was presented at last month's meeting. But what you asked for was a very detailed landscaping plan, which is what they brought back this month that had the very specific names to the shrubs and specific names to the trees.

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There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Cowhig, Assistant Secretary  
Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission

MD/jd.ps